

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

11 September 1959  
Control No. 160/55

MEMORANDUM FOR: Files

25X1A9a FROM : [REDACTED]  
SUBJECT : Balthasar Jose Elber  
25X1A2g REFERENCE : [REDACTED] 18 August 1959

25X1A9a

1. [REDACTED] Commercial Intelligence Division, BFC, called on 9 September 1959 to inquire whether S/TD had any information to confirm or refute statements made by subject in the reference despatch as BFC was considering granting an exception to AAP sanctions to permit issuance of a visa. Mr. Elber had indicated that he terminated early in 1953 his relationship with Comercio Trust, a notorious Vaduz, Liechtenstein trading firm; that he had no knowledge that its activities were illegal at the time he conducted them; and that he acted solely as Director of the firm operating under instructions from superiors rather than planning the firm's activities.

25X1A2g 2. [REDACTED] tend to verify State documentation that  
25X1A9a Balthasar and Charles Elber were owners of the firm rather than  
25X1A2g directors. [REDACTED] asked whether she could make a  
statement to this effect. A review of clearances on the above-  
mentioned [REDACTED] materials revealed that [REDACTED] (18 June 1953)  
which contains such a statement was cleared for transmittal to  
Foreign Service posts at Paris (USRO), Zurich, Bern, Hamburg,  
25X1A9a Berlin and Bonn for BACKGROUND USE ONLY. This information was  
passed on to [REDACTED] for inclusion in her reply to the  
25X1A2g referenced despatch. [REDACTED] confirmed her understanding  
that the [REDACTED] information was cleared for BACKGROUND USE ONLY.

3. It was noted that we had no indication that Elber had engaged in East-West trade since early 1953 nor that Comercio Trust still operated from 1954 forward. While we had no evidence that Elber actually knew his operations violated East-West trade control regulations, the extent and efficacy of his operations indicate that he was aware of the implications of his firm's activities. All other confirmable aspects of his statement were verified from sources in the Biographic Register.

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